

DRAFT

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7 March 1968

PHASEOUT HISTORY

1. During 1966 a study entitled "Advanced Reconnaissance Aircraft History" was accomplished. The study group was designated by the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the Budget, and the DCI to make an appraisal of the A-12 (OXCART) and SR 71 aircraft flights. After consideration of several alternatives, the study concluded that the A-12 flight should be mothballed effective 31 December 1967. The report based its findings on these assumptions:

- a. The SR-71 was to be fully operational by October 1967.
- b. The difference in operational altitude and speed were irrelevant.
- c. A savings over a five-year period would be accomplished.

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2. Subsequent to the decision to close out the OXCART program, it was decided to deploy the A-12 to [REDACTED] 25X1A

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[REDACTED] for the primary purpose of overflight of North Viet Nam. The SR-71 vehicle did not obtain an operationally ready status at the expected time and the OXCART program has been extended twice. The decision to extend the OXCART

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program for 3 months occurred on 23 October 1967. This extended the program through 31 March 1968. On 29 December 1967 the OXCART program was extended through 30 June 1968 with an overlap of one month duration with the SR-71 for photographic coverage of SE Asia. The SR-71 is now scheduled to deploy to [REDACTED] and to be operationally ready for assumption of primary responsibility for the SE Asia reconnaissance mission by 15 March. The OXCART vehicle will remain deployed to [REDACTED] until 30 days after the SR-71 assumes the primary responsibility after which it will be redeployed to the United States at [REDACTED]. The OXCART program will maintain operational readiness through 30 June 1968 after which the aircraft will be stored and the program terminated.